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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

11 August 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Henry A. Kissinger  
Assistant to the President for  
National Security Affairs

SUBJECT : Requested Impact Study

1. Attached for your personal information and use are two copies of the requested analysis of the impact of the U. S. bombing and mining program on North Vietnam. This paper was structured in light of the requirements conveyed in Mr. Odeen's 7 August conversation with my associates and my 9 August conversation with you.

2. As you indicated was your desire, this paper has by design a quite narrow focus. It addresses itself primarily (and almost exclusively) to the U. S. interdiction program's impact on North Vietnam's economic, logistics and manpower situation. As flagged in paragraph i of its conclusions, this paper explicitly does not address the whole range of factors which influence Hanoi's policy decisions. We flagged this limited focus to preclude any ambiguity or confusion on a most important point: Our analysis indicates that the strains on North Vietnam in the areas this paper treats are severe but probably, of themselves, manageable. This, however, does not necessarily mean -- and we are certainly not contending -- that Hanoi's policy or strategy could not change during the four month time frame our paper considers. The total range of factors that bear on the thinking of the dozen odd men who make "Hanoi's" decisions were discussed in the 3 August draft memorandum sent privately to you on Friday, 4 August. The attached study is a detailed examination of only some -- not all -- of the factors considered in that broader and more comprehensive 3 August analysis.

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3. At this writing we are holding distribution of the attached memorandum to your two copies plus one copy for Mr. Odeen. Further distribution (e.g. to the other WSAG principals) is a matter that can be discussed and decided next week.

Richard Helms  
Director

Attachment